

friends and colleagues from across America, continue to report that Americans want us to move and act on the mandate that was handed to us on November 8, 1994, and that mandate is to balance the budget, to cut taxes, to cut spending, to cut regulations, to cut out bureaucracies, and make sweeping changes that will reform the welfare state and change the welfare state, where we stop encouraging reckless behavior and we start encouraging productivity and hard work.

I held 30 townhall meetings and had over 100 other meetings and countless TV and radio talk shows. Again, the clear message, the resounding message that I heard time and time again, was make something happen in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, up here when you are in Washington, if you talk about just cutting the increase of spending on a Federal program, they call you a radical. They say that it is going to have a devastating impact; that you are out of touch with America.

Let me tell you something: You ain't out of touch with America when you talk about radically downsizing the Federal Government. You are out of touch with lobbyists, you are out of touch with special interest groups, you are out of touch with bureaucrats, and you are out of touch with a national press corps that still does not get it, that still believes that the unprecedented congressional landslide on November 8, 1994, was a fluke, and somehow it is just going to go away.

Let me tell you something: It ain't going away. It is here to stay. Americans do not trust the Federal Government to micromanage every single part of their lives.

One year ago President Clinton sent Congress home, and when they came back, they brought in the message, "Your health care reform bill is dead on arrival. Americans do not want socialized medicine."

Well, let me tell you something: We came home to our districts this time, and the American people came to us, and they are not saying that you are moving too fast; they are saying that you are not moving fast enough. They say make something happen.

Now, we have made quite a bit of progress. The Wall Street Journal and congressional historians say that this Congress has done more in 8 months than any other Congress since Reconstruction, since the 1870's, in over a century. We are not the imperial Congress that we were a year ago when the Democrats ruled this House, when Tom Foley was Speaker of the House. This Congress passed the Shays Act, so now Congress has to abide by the same laws as the rest of the country has to abide by. This Congress cut committee staff by one-third. This Congress passed term limits on committee chairmen so we do not have little empires inside of this Congress. This Congress passed term limits on the Speaker of the House. This Congress passed a ban on

proxy voting. And this Congress, I am sure, will have no problem with also passing a ban on lobbyist gifts, if it comes up at the appropriate time and place.

We have a challenge before us. I really think you would be hard-pressed to find a time in recent American history where this Congress was going to deal with as many important issues as we will be dealing with in the next 1 or 2 months.

We have an opportunity to do something this Congress has not done in 40 years: balance the budget. We have an opportunity to save Medicare. The trustees say it is going bankrupt. Almost half of the Congress is sticking their head in the sand and saying "Let's just hope it goes away," and the other half is daring to make a difference. Let us dare to make a difference on Medicare and save senior citizens from the pain that they will experience if we do nothing.

Let us pass tough welfare reform. Forget what the lobbyists and special interests say. Americans want tough welfare reform. We cannot be cowards; we have to be bold. We have to step forward and make a difference with the mandate that was given to us.

I will once again quote Bobby Kennedy, who in 1966 in Johannesburg, South Africa, said, "The future does not belong to those who are content with today, apathetic toward common problems and their fellow man alike, timid and fearful in the face of new ideas and bold projects. Rather it will belong to those who can blend vision, reason and courage in a personal commitment to the ideals and great enterprises in American society."

Today I make that commitment to make a difference, to make something happen, and boldly move into the 21st century with the values that created this country and Republic over 200 years ago.

#### THE GIFT BAN AND LOBBYING REFORM PROVISIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives is a House that is in need of repair. After decades of withstanding the heavy reins of special interests, lobbyists and gifts, our House has truly suffered. Our structure is not sound, and this once great institution is in danger of collapse. Today in fact, and my colleague who spoke a minute ago, I would say to him that today, we have an opportunity in this House. We have a historic opportunity to begin to rebuild this institution by passing gift and lobbying reform.

I think if there is anything that the American people want to see is that the Congress of the United States begins to live their lives the way working middle-class families in this country have got to live their lives. The Amer-

ican public strongly favors banning gifts from lobbyists to Members of Congress, and so do I. Perks and privileges demean this institution and every single person who serves here. That is not why we were elected to these offices. We are here to do the people's work, and we are well compensated for that. We do not need free vacations, free frequent flyer miles, free gifts, or free meals to sweeten the deal. Those working middle-class families that I talked about a moment ago, they are not getting anything free. They are paying and paying and paying. They are not able to keep their heads above water, and they are frightened to death of what is going to happen to themselves and to their families. For the first time in this country, that American dream is no longer there. Families are concerned that their kids are not going to get the same benefits and the same advantages that they have had.

We do need to enforce disclosure by lobbyists. The American people have the right to know what legislation these groups are attempting to influence and how much money they are spending on those efforts. I remind my colleagues that it has been the House that has traditionally led lobbying and gift reform efforts in the Congress. It is high time that we tackle these issues and join our colleagues in the other body in implementing serious gift and lobby reform. Some of us have already instituted a no-gift policy in our offices, because we feel so strongly about this. I can speak from experience; it is not that difficult to just say no to lobbyists.

Because the Republican leadership has repeatedly told us that the schedule for this season is full, this vote today will probably be our last chance to pass lobby and gift reform this year. Let us seize the opportunity to limit the influence of special interests on Congress once and for all. Let us take a definitive step to really reforming this institution.

So I urge my colleagues today to join me and others who are speaking here this morning to join us in this effort to defeat the previous question on the rule in order that the American people know once and for all that we are serious about repairing this House of Representatives. It is time to shore up these walls, to rebuild this institution. Let it be reflective of the people's interests, and not reflective of the special interests.

#### SUPPORT LOBBY REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky [Mr. WARD] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in strong support of lobby reform measures which have already been adopted by the other body. I want to thank the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT] for calling this special order to address this very